

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method of managing at least one aspect of a supplier selection process, comprising the steps of:
 - establishing a value threshold;
 - establishing a plurality of supplier classes, each supplier class corresponding to a supplier selection guideline to be used when a member of the supplier class is considered for selection;
 - establishing a transaction before ~~a~~any supplier is selected for said transaction, said transaction having an associated value that is unrelated to the plurality of supplier classes;
 - comparing, before any supplier is selected for said transaction, said transaction value with said value threshold in an automated manner to determine a transaction guideline;
 - for each supplier class represented in a plurality of potential suppliers, determining the corresponding supplier selection guideline; and
 - selecting ~~said a~~ supplier for said established transaction by applying said transaction guideline and said determined supplier selection guidelines.

2. (canceled).

3. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein said transaction value includes a price associated with at least one of a good and a service associated with said transaction.

4. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 3, wherein the step selecting said supplier further includes the step of documenting a characteristic of said supplier selection process in response to said price being greater than said value threshold.

5. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection process further includes the step of notifying a purchaser to document said supplier selection process characteristic.

6. (canceled).

7. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 5, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection process further includes the steps of:

establishing a supplier selection guideline;

comparing said documentation with said selection guideline.

8. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 7, wherein said transaction value includes an actual committed value of said transaction.

9. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 8, further including the step of monitoring said actual committed value during an active period of said transaction.

10. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 8, wherein the step of documenting said characteristic of said supplier selection process further includes the step of documenting said characteristic of said supplier selection process in response to said actual amount billed against said transaction being greater than said value threshold.

11. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein said transaction value includes a predicted transaction value.

12. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 11, further including the steps of:
comparing a characteristic of said transaction with a characteristic of at least one previous transaction; and
determining said predicted transaction value in response to said comparison.

13. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 12, wherein the step of documenting said procurement process further includes the step of documenting a characteristic of said supplier selection process in response to said predicted ' billed amount being greater than said value threshold.

14. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 13, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection process further includes the step of notifying a purchaser to document said supplier selection process characteristics.

15. (canceled).

16. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 14, wherein the step of documenting said procurement process further includes the steps of:
establishing a supplier selection guideline;
comparing said documentation with said selection guideline.

17. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 16, wherein the step of establishing said purchasing threshold further includes the step of establishing said purchasing threshold in response to said supplier selection guideline.

18. (currently amended) A method of managing a procurement process, comprising the steps of:

establishing a value threshold;
identifying a supplier selection guideline;
identifying a plurality of supplier classes;
establishing a transaction before ~~a~~ any supplier is selected for said transaction,
said transaction having an associated value unrelated to the plurality of supplier classes;

comparing, before any supplier is selected for said transaction, said transaction value with said value threshold in an automated manner to determine a transaction guideline;

selecting-said a supplier for said transaction by applying said transaction guideline and said supplier selection guideline;

determining a documentation amount in response to said selection guideline and said transaction guideline; and

documenting at least one characteristic of said supplier selection in response to said documentation amount.

19. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 18, wherein said transaction value includes a price associated with at least one of a good and a service associated with said transaction.

20. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 19, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic further includes the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic in response to said purchase amount being greater than said value threshold.

21. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 18, wherein said transaction value is an actual committed value of said transaction.

22. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 21, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic further includes the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic in response to said actual amount billed against said transaction being greater than said value threshold.

23. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 21, further including the step of monitoring said actual committed value during an active period of said transaction.

24. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 18, wherein said transaction value includes a predicted transaction value.

25. (previously presented) A method, as set forth in claim 24, wherein the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic further includes the step of documenting said supplier selection characteristic in response to said predicted billed amount against said transaction being greater than said value threshold.

26. (original) A method, as set forth in claim 25, further including the steps of:

comparing a characteristic of said transaction with a characteristic of at least one previous transaction; and

determining said predicted billed amount against said transaction in response to said comparison.

27. (currently amended) An apparatus configured to manage a procurement process, comprising:

a repository including at least one transaction, said transaction having an associated transaction value;

a monitoring system configured to establish a value threshold, establish a plurality of supplier classes, each supplier class corresponding to a supplier selection guideline to be used when a member of the supplier class is considered for selection, compare said transaction value with said value threshold to determine a transaction guideline before any supplier is selected for said transaction, determine a supplier selection guideline corresponding to each supplier class represented in a plurality of suppliers, and select a supplier for said transaction by applying the transaction guideline and the determined supplier selection guidelines, the selecting including documenting at least one aspect of said supplier selection in response to said transaction guideline.

28. (original) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 27, wherein said transaction value includes a price of at least one of a good and a service associated with said transaction.

29. (original) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 28, wherein said monitoring system is further configured to notify a purchaser associated with said transaction in response to said price being greater than said value threshold.

30. (original) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 28, wherein said monitoring system is further configured to determine whether a documentation procurement process characteristic associated with said transaction has been documented in response to said price being greater than said value threshold.

31. (original) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 30, wherein said monitoring system is configured to notify a purchaser associated with said transaction to enter said documentation procurement process characteristic.

32-34. (cancelled)

35. (currently amended) A method of selecting a supplier of goods or services in a transaction, said method comprising the steps of:

establishing a plurality of supplier classes, each supplier class corresponding to a supplier selection requirement to be used when a member of the supplier class is considered for selection;

after the supplier classes are established, categorizing a plurality of potential suppliers according to the supplier classes;

before any supplier is selected for said transaction, comparing a value of the transaction to a threshold value to determine a transaction guideline;

for a supplier class represented in the plurality of potential suppliers, determining the corresponding supplier selection requirement; and

~~automatically selecting a~~the supplier for the transaction by applying the transaction guideline and the determined supplier selection requirements.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein applying the supplier selection requirement includes documenting data related to at least one of: suppliers from whom bids were solicited, suppliers that responded to a solicitation for bids, unsolicited bids, and bids received but not selected.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the plurality of supplier classes includes at least one of: small businesses, disadvantaged businesses, minority-owned businesses, veteran-owned businesses, woman-owned businesses, and hub-zoned businesses.